

Knowledge of Law 219/2017: Provisions for Informed Consent and Advanced Directives Treatment

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Introduction

OBJECTIVE: evaluate the activity of neurologists on Informed Consent and Advanced care Planning (ACP, Pianificazione Condivisa delle Cure) based on the law 219/2017.

DESIGN: on line survey among the members of Italian Neurology Society (SIN).

Method

The Bioethics and Palliative Care Study Group of SIN discussed the application of law 219/2017, then carried out a survey within the subgroup on knowledge and application of articles 1 paragraph 10; 5 paragraphs 1, 2, 4, then sent it to all the SIN members on March 24, 2019, the survey ended on April 14th.

Results

78 neurologists out of 2400 members participated; 14% were less than 35 years old; 54% women; 40% worked in Northern Italy; 45% worked in a non-academic public hospital and 61% in acute care. 58% of participants declared that there were no information or training moments in their setting, 72% that there were no active working groups on the law, and 60% that they were not aware of the presence of activities at Regional level, at least expected by 2019.

74% had no indications for the ACP in their settings and 79.5% had no institutional reference tools.

67% did not know the difference between ACP and Advanced Directives (Disposizioni Anticipate di Trattamento - DAT).

Only 18 neurologists (23%) carried out ACPs, informing (17/18) the general practitioner and the community team (Home and Palliative Care). 67% (12/18) of those drafting ACPs conducted a dedicated interview, 6/12 in ALS, with others including Parkinson, MS or dementia, rating the medium, short-term or poor prognosis. All participants agreed that the GPs/community teams and PCU would be the settings to which they would communicate the ACPs. Among those who answered, 78% (47/60) would prefer a dedicated interview, choosing ALS, dementia and Parkinson to propose ACP.

See charts for further results.

Conclusion

The most striking fact is the very low number of replies to the survey, which could mean little interest on this topic. The majority of participants do not know difference between ACP and DAT which may be indicative of an ignorance of the law 219/17. The other datum is the scarcity of education and training programs, whereas, given the paramount consequences in clinical practice of the law, dissemination and continuing medical education on these topics should be a priority.



Bibliografia

Legge 22 dicembre 2017, n. 219. "Norme in materia di consenso informato e di disposizioni anticipate di trattamento". GU Serie Generale n.12 del 16-01-2018.